How to organize my first Openki course?

You have posted a course on Openki? Great, you took the first step! These tips will help you to organize your first meeting and to build a continuous Openki course.

1. How to find a venue?

- Do you have access to a meeting room, neighborhood room, garage, basement etc.? Is your living room suitable? Can the course take place outside or in public places: e.g. in the woods, in a café or by the lake?
- Ask the participants whether someone can organize a room.
- Community centres (e.g. in Zurich: https://gz-zh.ch/) sometimes provide rooms for free if the course is public and free of charge.
- If you cannot find a suitable room, you can contact Openki. We keep a list of available rooms and will be happy to help you: community@openki.net.

2. How to find participants for my course?

- Invite friends and acquaintances personally.
- Advertise the course in your neighbourhood (agenda / bulletin board / neighbourhood newspaper).
- Share the course via Twitter, Xing, LinkedIn or Facebook. **Share the Facebook post with Openki so that we can share it on our wall**.
- Post the course on additional platforms such as Ronorp or Spontacts.
- Collaborate with a club, association or other suitable organization.
- Don't hesitate to start your course small, even groups of 2-3 participants work.

3. How to communicate with the course participants?
Openki

- Announce an event via openki.net as soon as the date is fixed. This will inform everyone who is interested in the course.
- In the discussion area you can write comments that are visible to everyone.
- Write private messages to participants by clicking on their name or the envelope icon.

- Each course has an organization team (O-Team). As the initiator of the course, you are automatically the first member of the O-Team. The O-Team can administer the course on Openki (create events, change course dates, etc.). Invite other participants to the team by clicking on the megaphone.

Messenger

- Messaging services such as Whatsapp, Signal, Threema or Telegram are suitable for more intensive communication. (The advantage of Threema or Telegram is that you don›t have to publish your mobile number.)

Weitere nützliche Seiten

- Doodle or Framadate: Find a common course date.
- Etherpad or Google Docs: Write and share texts together.
- Loomio: Make complicated decisions in the group.
- Dropbox or Googledrive: Share large files.

4. How to facilitate a course?

- Especially at the first meeting it is important that someone (probably you) facilitates the meeting. As facilitator, you will make the introduction, lead through the meeting, respond to the needs of the participants and keep track of time. Also take a look at the «Checklist Openki Course».
- If desired, Openki can provide a facilitator to help with the first meeting, upon availability. Contact: community@openki.net.
- Here you will find further information on facilitation and literature.

5. How to set a reference price?

- Openki believes that courses should be accessible to everyone, regardless of the participants› financial situation. That›s why courses only have reference prices (desired donations, so to speak). Participants are welcome to give more, but every contribution (whether 0.- or 50.-) entitles the person to participate to the same extent. There can only be fixed costs for material, space, etc.
- As the organizer, you may determine the amount of the reference price yourself. However, we recommend that you discuss it with the course participants. Openki already has experience in setting reference prices, which we are happy to share with you: community@openki.net.

6. How to get people to come again?

- Send a reminder before the course (1 week to 2 days before).

- If necessary, contact participants personally.

- Talk with the group about your (individual) learning goals.

- Establish a regular rhythm for your meetings (e.g. every two weeks or once a month).

- Involve the participants in the organization: Who wants to lead through the course next time? Who will advertise the course? Point out that the participants can take over different roles.

- Set the next date already during the course.

- Try to build up a community: e.g. take a break and discuss personal stuff or go out for a drink afterwards.

7. How can I get in touch with other Openki course organisers?

To exchange experiences with other course organisers can be very inspiring and helpful. Openki course organizers meet irregularly in the Openki mentor / organizer exchange. A meeting can be initiated by any interested person at any time. You can also write your questions and comments online in the discussion area.

Checklist Openki course

Before the course

Set date

Inform participants

Compile course materials

Prepare the room

At the beginning of the course

Specify language (dialect/High German/English?)

Check-In (name, emotional state, expectations of the course, etc.)

Possibly a warm-up game to get to know each other.

If necessary, divide roles:
Documentation (Does the group want documentation of the course? Who takes notes? Where will the notes be shared?)
Facilitator
Possibly other roles like **timekeeper**, **cook**, ...

Set reference price

Talk about (individual) learning goals

Main part

At the end of the course

Possibly a learning agreement: How often and for how long will we continue to meet? How do we want to learn? What are your (individual) learning goals?

Discuss roles: Who is responsible for the organization? Do we need external specialists?

Define communication: How does the group stay in touch?

Feedback round: Were the expectations met?

Donation (reference price)